

Unit Cover Page

Unit Title: Heroes and Justice **Grade Level(s):** 12th Grade
Subject/Topic Area(s): English Literature
Key Words: Watchmen, heroes, justice, icon
Designed By: Darren Smart **Time Frame:** 6 (80 minutes)
School District: RSU #9 **School:** Mount Blue High School

Brief Summary of Unit (including curricular context and unit goals):

In this unit, students will read and analyze Alan Moore and Dave Gibbon's graphic novel, Watchmen. The story's themes and characters investigate both the subjectivity of justice and the role of heroism in culture. Whether the hero is entirely fictional or rooted in reality, there is a strong connection between the character, justice, and media. By reading the novel, students will discover how and why popular media highlights heroes for the general population. A hero reflects cultural perspectives in the time and setting they are created, and students will have the chance to create their own hero that relates personally to their lives. Furthermore, the role of icons and symbolism in Watchmen allow the student to examine the images of their own lives and the significance of these icons.

Unit design status: ☐ *completed Template pages - Stage 1, 2, and 3*
☐ *completed Blueprint for each performance task* ☐ *completed rubric(s)*
☐ *directions to students & teachers* ☐ *materials & resources listed*
☐ *suggested accommodations* ☐ *suggested extensions*
Status: *initial draft (date - _____)* *revised draft (date - _____)*
☐ *peer reviewed* ☐ *content reviewed* ☐ *field tested* ☐ *validated* ☐ *anchored*

Stage 1: Identify Desired Results.

Established Goals:

G

Maine Learning Results: English Language Arts- A. Reading

A2 Literary Texts

Grades 9-Diploma Watchmen

Students read text, within a grade appropriate span of text complexity, and present analyzes of fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry using excerpts from the text to defend their assertions.

Evaluate the theme or themes, whether explicitly stated or implied, in a literary text.

What understandings are desired?

Students will understand that:

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- 1. Achieving justice is relative to the characters or persons involved.*
- 2. During their time, heroes reflect cultural perspectives on important current events.*
- 3. The use of symbolism and imagery emphasizes tone and important plot elements.*

What essential questions will be considered?

Q

- 1. Why is it important for artists and the media to create heroes?*
- 2. To what extent is justice considered altruistic?*
- 3. Why is symbolism and imagery able to emphasize aspects of a story?*

What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this unit?

Students will know:

Vocabulary: graphic novel, holism, reductionism, moral, hero, antihero, villain, tone, imagery, symbolism, justice, and icon. Important people: Minutemen, Rorschach, Ozymandias, Doctor Manhattan, Comedian, Silk Spectre, Nite Owl, Tales Of The Black Freighter. Critical details: character reactions, relationships, perspectives, sequence of plot, subplots.

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Students will be able to:

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Justify each character's perspective on justice. Evaluate the themes found in Watchmen. Design a creative work that utilizes symbolism, imagery, and the aspects of a hero. Compare and contrast each character's moral ideals. Consider the role of symbolism and imagery in the interpretation of a story. Reflect on Watchmen and determine which characters can be considered heroes.

Stage 2: Determine acceptable evidence.

What evidence will show that students understand?

Performance Tasks* (Summary in G.R.A.S.P.S. form):

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Goal: To develop and create a hero that reflects an important aspect of their life through the hero's story and symbol(s).

Role: Entering the podcast Comic Geek Speak contest "X-Ray Vision."

Audience: The hosts of CGS.

Situation: Hundreds of heroes will be submitted to win this contest, and the hosts are looking for something new, creative, and relative to an intelligent audience.

Product/Presentation: Comic Life.

Standards (Criteria from both rubrics - product and presentation): Comic Life creation: character, creativity, imagery/symbolism, focus on assign topic, neatness, and requirements. Oral presentation: content, preparedness, comprehension, evaluates peers, posture/eye contact, and time-limit.



**Complete a Performance Task Blueprint for each task (next page).*

Other Evidence (quizzes, tests, prompts, observations, dialogues, work samples, etc.):

- Students will write a blog about the images that surround their lives and the possible message of these sights.
- Students will create a Comic Life about the heroic origins of a single character from Watchmen.
- Students will keep a moving blog or podcast about the book's themes and ideas that interest them.
- Students will use Mixed Ink to create a definition of justice that best fits each character.
- Students will create a presentation on which character(s) they believe are heroes by using Comic Life, iMovie, or Glogster.
- Students will complete a Webquest and create their own heroes in Comic Life.

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Student Self-Assessment and Reflection:

- The moving journal will continually need their reflection.
- Reading prompts that are open-ended and require opinions will reach past summarizing.
- A short essay detailing why the student chose the hero they did will allow them to gather evidence and support their personal choices.

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Assessment Task Blueprint

What understandings/goals will be assessed through this task?

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Students will understand that during their time, heroes reflect cultural perspectives on important current events.

*Maine Learning Result
English A2*

What criteria are implied in the standard(s)/understanding(s) *regardless* of the task specifics? What qualities must student work demonstrate to signify that standards were met?

Heroes and justice

Icon

Through what authentic performance task will students demonstrate understanding?

Task Description:

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The podcast Comic Geek Speak is hosting a contest called “X-Ray Vision.” The hosts of the show are looking for a hero who is new and personal, someone who is easy to relate to. They want artists to consider their lives as the launching point for the creation of their hero. CGS is tired of the big-name stars and their cliché storylines; they want a hero rooted in things that appeal to a modern, intelligent audience. In the contest, artists can submit a hero of their design for consideration by CGS. In the “X-Ray Vision” contests, participants will have their work judged on the hero’s story and symbol, creativity, and the character’s marketing ability. The CGS hosts expect more than one hundred entries in their contest, and the winner will be awarded a contract with DC Comics and a spot on CGS’s next podcast interview.

What student products/performances will provide evidence of desired understandings?

Comic Life

Oral Presentation

By what criteria will student products/performances be evaluated?

- Character
- Creativity
- Imagery/Symbolism
- Focus on Assigned Topic
- Neatness
- Requirements

- Content
- Preparedness
- Comprehension
- Evaluate Peers
- Posture/Eye Contact
- Time-Limit



Stage 3: Plan learning experiences and instruction.

Consider the W.H.E.R.E.T.O. elements.



1. Students will understand that the use of symbolism and imagery emphasizes tone and important plot elements (**Where**). The entire world is filled with images and symbols that we see every day of our lives. It is important to identify and understand the meaning of icons that appear in our daily lives (**Why**). **Evaluate the theme or themes, whether explicitly stated or implied, in a literary text (What).**
2. To engage the students, class will start with a slide show of obscure and common symbols. There will then be a quick discussion on what the students think each might be (**Hook**).
3. Students will know the following terms: tone, imagery, symbolism, icon, and graphic novel (**Equip**). The students will have a graphic organizer with columns for both symbols and icons they can think of and those that can be found around the school (**Explore**). Students will explore the school in teams to identify symbols and reoccurring icons throughout the school and those external to the building. The class will then discuss what they found (**Experience**).
4. On the graphic organizers, there will be a blank space where students can add ideas that their peers contribute during discussion (**Rethink**). By discussing the meanings of the symbols in class, new ideas or concepts may become apparent and seem interesting to a student. These ideas may also change how they feel about the icons they chose or found (**Revise**). Also, students will then apply these skills outside of the classroom by writing a blog about symbols and icons they find around their house and/or community (**Refine**).
5. For assessment, students will create a blog post in which they write about icons and symbols around their home and/or community and the possible meaning(s) of each (**Evaluation**).
6. These intelligences will be addressed (**Tailor**):
 - **Verbal:** The teacher will give instruction and there will be discussions held both as a class and in groups.
 - **Logical:** Students will discuss abstract meanings as they apply logically to the individuals.
 - **Visual:** Each student will be given a graphic organizer in which to brainstorm and develop answers.
 - **Naturalist:** The students will be looking for symbols in nature and external sites like the community or area surrounding their home.
 - **Bodily/Kinesthetic:** In groups, the students will travel through the school and identify icons.
 - **Interpersonal:** Students will work in groups, teams, and as a class to discuss the meanings of their findings.
 - **Intrapersonal:** After working in groups and as a class, students will work on together to brainstorm and complete the blog post.
7. Students will consider the role of symbolism and imagery in the interpretation of a story. Product: blog entry (**Organize**).

Stage 3: Plan learning experiences and instruction.

Consider the W.H.E.R.E.T.O. elements.



8. Students will understand that during their time, heroes reflect cultural perspectives on important current events (**Where**). Especially with the recent boon of comic-to-movie adaptations, students can see the media highlight characters whose qualities reflect their era. To understand why heroes exist, students must look at the caricatures that media creates all around us (**Why**). **Evaluate the theme or themes, whether explicitly stated or implied, in a literary text (What).**

9. At the beginning of class, a movie will be shown that identifies a variety of heroes, such as fictional, historical, political, and military characters that are often recognized by the media (**Hook**).

10. Students will know the following terms: hero, villain, moral, justice, and icon. Also, they will be able to identify these important people: Rorschach, Ozymandias, Doctor Manhattan, the Comedian, Silk Spectre, and Nite Owl. Lastly, students will be able to identify the subplots of characters and their reactions in particular situations (**Equip**). In groups, the students will be given a graphic organizer to write what characteristics a hero might possess. These can either come from the heroes shown in the movie or from their own experiences (**Explore**). The students are in groups to define the most common attributes of a hero and what each of these ideas means. They will work together to brainstorm and collect ideas from each other. These groups will then participate in a Cubing activity in which they must abstractly describe the traits of characters from Watchmen (**Experience**).

11. Both the group brainstorming and activity and the class discussion afterward will allow the students to more carefully define their own ideas on a hero (**Rethink**). Through these discussions and interactions, students will have the chance to edit their graphic organizer and make changes that could affect the direction they take for the assessment task (**Revise**). By creating a presentation in either Comic Life or Glogster, students will have the chance to develop their ideas further (**Refine**).

12. For assessment, students will create a presentation using Comic Life or Glogster that shows and explains why a character from the Watchmen is a hero, a villain, or neither. In this presentation, students can include different aspects of the Cubing activity that might help them describe their opinion. Students will also include a hero of their choosing in the project and describe the attributes that apply to that person or character (**Evaluation**).

13. These intelligences will be addressed (**Tailor**):

- **Verbal:** The teacher will give instruction and there will be discussions held both as a class and in groups.
- **Logical:** Students will discuss abstract meanings as they apply logically to the individuals.
- **Visual:** Each student will be given a graphic organizer in which to brainstorm and develop answers.
- **Bodily/Kinesthetic:** The students will move between stations during the Cubing activity.
- **Intrapersonal:** The presentations will be created independently.
- **Interpersonal:** Students will work in groups to both discuss the attributes of a hero and participate in the Cubing activity.
- **Musical/Rhythmic:** There will be a station during the Cubing activity that is designed around music's ability to describe a person.
- **Naturalist:** There will be a station during the Cubing activity that allows students to compare characters to items and animals that can be found in nature.

14. Students will reflect on Watchmen and determine which characters should or can be considered either heroes or villains. Product: Comic Life or Glogster presentation (**Organize**).

Stage 3: Plan learning experiences and instruction.

Consider the W.H.E.R.E.T.O. elements.



15. Students will understand that during their time, heroes reflect cultural perspectives on important current events. They will also understand that achieving justice is relative to the characters or persons involved (**Where**). By studying the origins of characters, students can analyze the effect a person's background has over their morals and views on justice. Everyday, students will meet people with differing views, and the histories of each person can play a large role in the perspective a person chooses (**Why**). **Evaluate the theme or themes, whether explicitly stated or implied, in a literary text (What).**

16. As class begins, the students will answer whether or not they believe a person's background is important in the way that that person develops opinions and beliefs. They will have to explain why or why not (**Hook**).

17. Students will know the following terms: moral, justice, hero, villain, and origin. They will also be able to understand the subplots, perspectives, and relationships of each of the important characters in Watchmen (**Equip**). Every student will be a graphic organizer that lists the characters of the graphic novel and provides space for the student to write the origins of each person (**Explore**). Once the character chart is finished, the students will gather in Jigsaw teams. Each group will be assigned a character from the chart and will search the text and images of the graphic novel for specific evidence of the origin of the character. The Jigsaw groups will then report their findings to the class (**Experience**).

18. By first brainstorming and writing the origins of the character individually and then gathering in groups, students will have the chance to compare their personal interpretation to the other members of the group (**Rethink**). As the groups search within the text for specific examples, students may need to change what they had originally wrote in the graphic organizer (**Revise**).

19. For assessment, students will create a Comic Life that details their personal origins to becoming a hero. It will be optional to the student whether they present their project or not (**Evaluation**).

20. These intelligences will be addressed (**Tailor**):

- **Verbal:** The teacher will give instruction and there will be discussions held both as a class and in groups.
- **Logical:** Students will discuss abstract meanings as they apply logically to the individuals.
- **Visual:** Each student will be given a graphic organizer in which to brainstorm and develop answers.
- **Intrapersonal:** Students will reflect on their origins and the sort of hero they might become.
- **Interpersonal:** In Jigsaw groups, students will search for textual evidence of an assigned hero's origins.
- **Musical/Rhythmic:** While the students are brainstorming and working in groups, music will be playing in the background.

21. Students will compare and contrast the heroic origins of each character. Product: Comic Life (**Organize**).

Stage 3: Plan learning experiences and instruction.

Consider the W.H.E.R.E.T.O. elements.



22. Students will understand that achieving justice is relative to characters or persons involved (**Where**). The idea of justice is a continuously changing phenomenon that students must deal with everyday. Justice can be seen in classroom rules, military codes, government laws, and social interaction. It is necessary to understand different perspectives and the positive and negative aspects of each (**Why**). **Evaluate the theme or themes, whether explicitly stated or implied, in a literary text (What).**

23. A short, dramatic movie will be shown with scenes and images from events that relate to the final chapters of Watchmen. These events are also the focus of articles that the teacher will give during class (**Hook**).

24. Students will know the following terms: holism, reductionism, justice, symbolism, and imagery. They will also be able to understand character perspectives, reactions, and relationships and understand the sequence of plot. Lastly, students will understand the Tales of the Black Freighter (Equip). Students will be given a graphic organizer that will be used in Jigsaw groups (**Explore**). The class will be split into Jigsaw groups and given both a graphic organizer and an article. Every group will have a different article that contains the same moral questions as Watchmen does. These articles will be reports on different events in history that can be seen as just or unjust depending on the perspective of a person. In the graphic organizer, students will brainstorm and summarize the article. There will then be space where they can compare particular instances to text and images in the graphic novel (**Experience**).

25. The groups will spend class discussing and brainstorming ideas about the articles and their relation to Watchmen (**Rethink**). From this point, the assessment task will continually allow students to enter ideas and edit them as they read entries by their peers (**Revise**). A final draft of the class's work will be presented online that includes contribution from every student (**Refine**).

26. For assessment, students will use the software Mixed Ink to create a definition of justice and examine how this definition corresponds to each major character's perspective. A final, submitted draft in this program requires participation from every member of the class (**Evaluation**).

27. These intelligences will be addressed (**Tailor**):

- **Verbal:** The teacher will give instruction and there will be discussions held both as a class and in groups.
- **Logical:** Students will discuss abstract meanings as they apply logically to the individuals.
- **Visual:** Each student will be given a graphic organizer in which to brainstorm and develop answers.
- **Musical/Rhythmic:** The movie at the start of class will contain music that is meant to convey emotion and resonance. This will help the class to begin to consider the implications of the topic.
- **Intrapersonal:** On their own, students will develop and submit drafts in Mixed Ink.
- **Interpersonal:** The Jigsaw groups will discuss and examine their article and report to the class. For assessment, the class will need to develop a final draft that incorporates ideas from every student.
- **Naturalist:** In the movie and articles, there will be images and reports of man's impact on nature.

28. Students will be able to justify each character's perspective on justice. Product: Mixed Ink (**Organize**).

Stage 3: Plan learning experiences and instruction.

Consider the W.H.E.R.E.T.O. elements.



29. Students will understand that achieving justice is relative to the characters or persons involved (**Where**). Now, both the hero and the relativity of justice should be known and understood by the student. It is important to address and examine the ambiguous ending of the text because its insight presents a new perspective on the entirety of Watchmen. Students will realize that both the idea of justice and heroes in media and social interaction are manipulated by the event surrounding them. By understanding this, students will be more adept at viewing social and political spheres and issues that envelope this country and form more knowledgeable opinions (**Why**). **Examine the theme or themes, whether explicitly stated or implied, in a literary text (What).**

30. The teacher will begin class by showing the film adaptation of *Tales of the Black Freighter* (**Hook**).

31. Students will know the following terms: holism, reductionism, hero, villain, icon, symbolism, imagery, and origins. They will be able to identify and understand character perspectives, reactions, relationships, the sequence of plot and subplots, and be able to identify *Tales of the Black Freighter*, *Rorschach*, *Doctor Manhattan*, *Ozymandias*, *the Comedian*, *Silk Spectre*, and *Nite Owl* (**Equip**). Students will be given a graphic organizer with columns for holism, reductionism, and unsure. Students will write each character's name under the column they believe is appropriate and describe why (**Explore**). The students will be broken up into groups to pool their answers. Then, as a whole, the class will then discuss and come up with a final list of characters (**Experience**).

32. By finding evidence in the text for each of their choices, the students will have to reflect on each of their answers (**Rethink**). The class will then gather in groups where different ideas may be presented by other students and accepted as right (**Revise**). Then the class will present their findings as a whole and create a final draft that details each character's moral opinion (**Refine**).

33. For assessment, students will create a blog entry or podcast in which they will choose a favorite character from Watchmen. They will then write about why they chose the character and how they think their actions were or were not justified by the end of the graphic novel (**Evaluation**).

34. These intelligences will be addressed (**Tailor**):

- **Verbal:** The teacher will give instruction and there will be discussions held both as a class and in groups.
- **Logical:** Students will discuss abstract meanings as they apply logically to the individuals.
- **Visual:** Each student will be given a graphic organizer in which to brainstorm and develop answers.
- **Intrapersonal:** For assessment, students will choose a favorite character and write or speak about their actions and the justification for those actions.
- **Interpersonal:** The class will discuss each character's moral ambitions as a group and a whole.
- **Musical/Rhythmic:** Students can choose to incorporate audio and musical effects into a podcast entry.

35. Students will evaluate the themes within Watchmen. Product: blog or podcast (**Organize**).

Stage 3: Plan learning experiences and instruction.

Consider the W.H.E.R.E.T.O. elements.



36. Students will understand that during their time, heroes reflect cultural perspectives on important current events. They will also understand that achieving justice is relative to the characters or persons involved. Lastly, students will recognize how the use of symbolism and imagery emphasizes tone and important plot elements (**Where**). It is important for the students to develop their own wok because it requires him/her to examine and synthesis information as it relates to them (**Why**). **Examine the theme or themes, whether explicitly stated or implied, in a literary text (What).**

37. Students will read the introduction of the WebQuest, in which they will create heroes to submit to a fictional contest hosted by the podcast Comic Geek Speak (**Hook**).

38. Students will know the following terms: holism, reductionism, hero, villain, icon, graphic novel, moral, symbolism, imagery, and origins. (**Equip**). Each student will be given a graphic organizer where they will write each aspect of the project, from the origins of their hero, to their villain, etc. (**Explore**). Students will be able to discuss and brainstorm with peers over the project (**Experience**).

39. By discussing ideas and brainstorming with others, students will have the chance to share their opinions and ideas in a larger setting and see if each will work (**Rethink**). The teacher will require students to complete a storyboard or script that will be due before the project. The teacher will give feedback and help the student convert the storyboard or script into a draft of the final project (**Revise**). Students will have a chance to turn in their final project after it has been graded to make changes or edit mistakes (**Refine**).

40. For assessment, the students will complete the WebQuest task; they will develop a hero and his/her origins and story (**Evaluation**).

41. These intelligences will be addressed (**Tailor**):

- **Verbal:** The teacher will give instruction and there will be discussions held both as a class and in groups.
- **Logical:** Students will apply the abstract ideas to their project and personalize these ideas in ways that best suit the student.
- **Visual:** Each student will be given a graphic organizer in which to brainstorm and develop answers.
- **Intrapersonal:** The final project and storyboard/script will be developed on an individual basis. The students will choose how exactly they'd like to apply the ideas discussed in class.
- **Interpersonal:** Before starting the project, students will discuss ideas and opinions in class. The projects may require students to ask for others help.
- **Musical/Rhythmic:** Students can choose to use music in their project.
- **Bodily/Kinesthetic:** The project may require the student to physically move and pose as their character requires it.
- **Naturalistic:** The project may require nature to be used by the student.

42. Students will design a creative work that utilizes symbolism, imagery, and the aspects of a hero. Product: Comic Life (**Organize**).

Stage 3: Plan learning experiences and instruction.

Consider the W.H.E.R.E.T.O. elements.

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Friday	5 1. Origins (W) 2. Background (H) 3. Characters (E) 4. Text (R) 5. Comic Life (E) <i>1 Day</i>	10	15 <i>Presentations</i>
Thursday	4	9 1. Point of view (W) 2. Black Freighter (H) 3. Categories (E) 4. Text (R) 5. Blog entry/podcast (E) <i>1 Day</i>	14
Wednesday	3 1. Heroes (W) 2. Video (H) 3. Cubing activity (E) 4. Attributes (R) 5. Presentation (E) <i>2 Days</i>	8	13 <i>Work Session</i>
Tuesday	2	7 1. Justice (W) 2. Event movie (H) 3. Jigsaw activity (E) 4. Brainstorming (R) 5. Mixed Ink (E) <i>2 Days</i>	12
Monday	1 1. World of symbols (W) 2. Slide show (H) 3. School icons (E) 4. The meaning (R) 5. Blog entry/podcast (E) <i>2 Days</i>	6	11 1. WebQuest (W) 2. Introduction (H) 3. Planning (E) 4. Script (R) 5. Comic Life (E) <i>1 Day</i>